



CHEPSTOW RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH
AND THE
PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR
FOR THE YEAR, 1965.

"High Trees",

Chepstow,

Mon.

CHEPSTOW RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

LIST OF RURAL DISTRICT COUNCILLORS

Chairman -- B. Beale.

Vice Chairman -- F. Vicarage.

Councillors

Rev. J. Barrie Evans
S.R. Baldwin.
A.S. Barker.
R.H. Bowen.
Major F.A.J. Cooper.
Rev.D. Francis.
L.H. Gardner.
L.M. Horton.
L. Hughes.
K.D. Hill.
W.E.G. Hodges.
Col. E.R. Hill.
Mrs. G.I. Heath.
L.T. Jacka.
J.E. Jones.
L.A. Jones.
W.J. Titley.
V.G. Thomas.

D.I.C. Lewis.
W. Little.
A.H. Morgan.
R.A. Mawhinney.
Mrs.C.L. Morgan.
W.J. Parker.
J.E. Price.
P.H. Price.
G.E. Pritchard.
V.L. Rees.
A.V.S. Reece.
R. Skinner.
T.P. Spencer.
S. Sparks.
Brig. G.B. Vaughan-Hughes.
W.R. Wheeler.
B.B. White.
F.C. Walker.
W. Walkley.

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Officers of the Council

Clerk.

T.T. Birbeck, F.A.I., F.R.V.S.

Medical Officer of Health

Dr. E.N. Dowell, M.R.C.S.,
L.R.C.P.

Chief Public Health Inspector
and Surveyor.

L. Whittingham, M.R.S.H.,
M.A.P.H.I., Cert.S.I.B.,
M.A. Rur.S., Certified
Inspector of Meats and other
Foods.

Public Health Inspector and Deputy
Surveyor.

D.C. Powell, A.M.I.P.H.E.,
M.R.S.H., M.A.P.H.I.,
M.R.I.P.H.H., Cert.S.I.B.,
Incorporated Sanitary
Engineer, Certified Inspector
of Meats and other Foods.

Treasurer

G.P.D. Morris.

CHEPSTOW RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

T. T. BIRBECK,
CLERK OF THE COUNCIL

TELEPHONE NO. 2214/2215

"High Trees,"
Chepstow, MON.

24th June, 1966.

The Chairman and Members,
Rural District Council of Chepstow.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I beg to submit the Annual Report of the Health and Conditions of your District for the year ended 31st December, 1965.

The health of your District continues to be satisfactory.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Mr. Whittingham and Mr. Powell for their help and co-operation.

I remain,

Your obedient servant,

E.N. DOWELL,

Medical Officer of Health.

CHEPSTOW RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL - 1965.

Statistics.

The estimated mid-year population was 14,720. In 1964, it was 13,780.

The natural increase, i.e., the figure that the number of births exceeds the number of deaths, 207. The natural increase in 1964 was 194.

Births

<u>Live Births</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	168	166	334
Illegitimate	5	8	13

Of the above, only 85 were registered with the local Registrar.

The highest number of births recorded since 1950 was 309 in 1964 and the lowest was 158 in 1953.

The live birth rate per 1000 of population for Monmouthshire was 19.0.5.

<u>Stillbirths</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	3	2	5

The following are details of transferable stillbirths as supplied by the Registrar General:-

- (i) Male.
 - I.a. Foetal asphyxia.
 - b. Ante-partum haemorrhage.
 - c. Pre-eclamptic toxæmia.
- (ii) Female.
 - I.a. Severe accidental haemorrhage.
 - b. Fall in bathroom.
- (iii) Male
 - Apparent cause unknown. No apparent cause.
 - History of mother's health (Petit.Mal.-daily treatment)
- (iv) Male
 - I.a. Hydrocephalus - spina bifida.
 - b. prematurity.
- (v) Female
 - I.a. Macerated foetus.
 - b. Pre-eclamptic toxæmia.
 - II. Pyelonephritis.

In 1962 there were 9 stillbirths.

Infant Mortality

Deaths of infants under one year of age

	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
Legitimate	1	4	5

The following gives a list of the deaths of infants under one year of age, giving age at, and cause of death:-

(i) Female	2 weeks	I.a. Cardio-respiratory failure following operation for congenital heart disease (transposition of great vessels).
(ii) Female	7 months	I.a. Asphyxia (accidental).
(iii) Male	1 month	I.a. Congenital Heart Disease. b. Transposition great vessels.
(iv) Female	1 day	I.a. Respiratory distress syndrome.
(v) Female	1 month	I.a. Meningitis. b. Myelomeningocele and hydrocephalus.

In 1959, 1960 and 1963, six infants under one year of age died.

The infant mortality rate per 1000 live births for Monmouthshire was 21.21.

Deaths

<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>	<u>Total</u>
75	65	140.

There were 145 deaths in 1962 and 115 deaths in 1960 and 1964.

There were seven deaths attributed to neoplasm of lung in 1956.

The death rate per 1000 of population for Monmouthshire was 12.31.

The following table gives a classification of the cause of death and the number attributed to each cause.

<u>Deaths</u>	<u>Males</u>	<u>Females</u>
Tuberculosis, respiratory	1	
Malignant neoplasm, stomach	5	2
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	6	
Other malignant and lymphatic neoplasms	6	5
Diabetes	1	1
Vascular lesions of nervous system	3	13
Coronary disease, angina	26	15
Hypertension with heart disease	1	
Other heart disease	2	7
Other circulatory disease	2	2
Pneumonia	2	2
Bronchitis	6	4
Nephritis and nephrosis	1	1
Congenital malformations	1	2
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	5	9
Motor vehicle accidents	3	
All other accidents	4	2
Total all causes	75	65

Diphtheria

For thirteen consecutive years, no case has been notified.

Diphtheria Immunisation

During the year, 291 children were immunised against diphtheria. In 1964, the number of immunisations was 225.

Of the number immunised, 115 were babies born in 1965 and 155 were born in 1964.

Vaccinations (smallpox)

In 1965 114 primary vaccinations were completed. The number for 1964 was 64.

Poliomyelitis

In 1957 four notifications of poliomyelitis were received. In 1955 there were three. With the exception of 1959 and 1961 when one case was notified, there has been no case of poliomyelitis since 1953.

Children are immunised by the local doctors, at clinics at Caldicot and Caerwent, and when the mobile Infant Welfare Clinic visits the rural areas.

Dysentery

For six consecutive years, no cases were notified.

Food Poisoning

Four cases were notified.

There was one family outbreak consisting of two cases and two cases were sporadic cases. The latter occurred at Caldicot and Rogiet.

Salmonella Stanley caused the sporadic cases and Salmonella Heidelberg the family outbreak.

The organisms were very resistant to treatment.

Tuberculosis

The only notification of a primary case of tuberculosis received during the year was that occurring in the lungs of a male aged 44 years.

All family contacts were examined by the Chest Physician.

Vaccination against Anthrax

There are no establishments in your district using materials which might expose the workers to special risk of contacting the disease.

Surveyor and Public Health Inspector's Annual
Report for the Year, 1965.

Inspections during the year

Dairies and Cowsheds	.....	10
Food preparing Premises	.....	124
Bakehouses	.....	12
Food Inspections	.....	283
Drainage	.....	284
Drain Testing	.....	112
Sewerage	.....	410
Water Supply	.....	94
Housing	.....	92
Infectious Disease & Disinfestation	.....	16
Nuisances	.....	34
Disinfestation	.....	14
Shops Acts	.....	315
Refuse Collection and Disposal	.....	286
Factories	.....	84
Building Byelaws	.....	926
Petrol Licences	.....	84
Miscellaneous	.....	972

By Owners after Informal Notices

Work Done

Housing Repairs	.....	36
Drainage Repairs	.....	8
Nuisances Abated	.....	12

By Owners after Statutory Notices

Housing Repairs	.....	1
Drainage Repairs	.....	—
Nuisances Abated	.....	—

Notices Served

Informal under Housing Acts	.....	38
Informal under Public Health Acts	.....	26
Statutory under Housing Acts	.....	—
Statutory under Public Health Acts	.....	1

Rodent Control.

For the first time for a considerable number of years one major infestation of rats was found on the refuse tip at Portskewett and the rat population migrated to an adjoining barley field where they did a large amount of damage for which the Council paid compensation. The assistance of the Ministry of Agriculture was sought and under the guidance of the Ministry's Officers the infestation was soon brought under control and the entire rat population was exterminated and did not reappear. Regular inspections were carried out to all possible sources of infestation such as the banks of streams and rivers, works canteens, hayricks during threshing operations, domestic premises and business premises as required. In addition agricultural premises were inspected and advice given as it is generally found that farmers prefer to carry out their own treatments. Sewers were baited twice yearly and regular visits paid to all sewage disposal works both large and small. The following table shows the number of inspections made and the infestations found:-

	L.A.	Dwellings	All other premises	Agricultural
No of properties inspected in the course of Survey under the Act.	3	623	29	326

Refuse Collection

The Council operate a weekly refuse collection service to all parts of the district and possess the following vehicles.

<u>Make</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Capacity</u>	<u>Date of Purchase</u>	<u>Crew.</u>
Dennis	Side Loader	10 cubic yards	15 - 5 - 57	Driver, two loaders.
Karrier Gamecock.	Rear Loader. Up and Over body to compress refuse	18 cubic yards	1 - 8 - 62	"
Karrier Ramillies	Rear Loader. Hydraulic Compressor.	35 cubic yards	1 - 6 - 65	" Additional Loader on one day
Scammell	Side Loader	9 cubic yards	17 - 6 - 57	Used part time over holiday periods etc., to augment normal collection.

Refuse Collection cont'd.

The Council occasionally utilise a tip in the adjoining Urban District and share in the cost of maintaining the approach thereto but generally refuse was disposed of at a partly controlled tip at Portskewett where covering was effected by means of a Massey Ferguson tractor augmented by additional labour as and when available.

Considerable damage was done by vandalism from time to time and the tip was set on fire. A workman's hut and tools were destroyed but the culprits were not traced. It is intended to dispen~~se~~se with this tip and commence disposal at a disused quarry which is being leased from the Ministry of Defence at Dinham. This will be properly controlled by a full time staff and a bulldozer which it is hoped to purchase especially for the purpose. The tip will be fully enclosed by a fence and it is thereby hoped that the vandalism problem will not occur. It is estimated at the present time that 460 cubic yards of refuse are disposed of each week. Covering material presents a problem and advantage has been taken of the various road works which are being undertaken in the area to secure as much soil as possible for this purpose.

Of the total dwellings in the district 1608 of them are Council houses and these are provided with dustbins at a small weekly charge. This means that at least this number of householders possess satisfactory receptacles in which to put out their refuse whilst only a small percentage of the remainder present any real problem. It is generally found that an informal approach is successful in securing the replacement of any defective bin. It has been the Council's policy to collect all household refuse and this has been taken to mean bulky items such as mattresses, old cookers, bedsteads etc., which would otherwise present a difficulty to the householder. The Council have, however, rightly refused to allow the disposal of old car bodies on their tip and this is one matter which has caused a dilemma particularly on some of the larger housing estates. During the year in order to overcome this difficulty, the Council contracted with a firm who has installed hydraulic compression equipment in another authority's area for the removal of any derelict cars on their housing estates on payment of a small fee.

The cost of refuse collection for the year was £11,678 including disposal and £124 was realised from the collection of waste products from Sudbrook Pulp Mills. This is effected by leaving the Scamell trailer for one day so that it may be loaded by the Pulp Mill staff and collected the following day by merely taking the cab from our Depot and connecting up.

The tip is sprayed regularly for flies and inspected for rats. A major problem in this latter direction existed during the year and this is referred to elsewhere.

Litter baskets are placed in many salient points throughout the area and various business premises are given extra collections at no extra cost. Again the Council suffered from vandalism in this respect.

Refuse Collection cont'd.

A problem existed regarding the collection of trade refuse particularly from the shops in the Caldicot area. Although the Council resolved to make a charge for this service, they later reversed their decision and decided to inaugurate a salvage collection service of waste paper and cardboard from all premises in the Southern part of the district. Unfortunately this was operating at a loss at the end of the year and was due to be reviewed.

Litter and other debris on housing estate roads which had not been taken over by the Highway Authority created a nuisance and these roads therefore were swept as well as possible with the limited labour force available.

Housing

The Council did not undertake any new building during the year but 130 private houses were constructed. The Council now own 1608 dwellings and 1509 of these have been built since the war.

Generally speaking, as one would expect, the standard of accommodation in these dwellings is good but towards the end of the year, considerable trouble was experienced with dampness in certain ground floor flats at Caerwent and particularly at Caldicot where the blocks of flats were constructed on very low lying land. The water table was high due to the tides of the adjoining River Severn and experiments were to be conducted during the beginning of 1966 to ascertain the exact cause of the trouble and to carry out work to alleviate this condition. The number of complaints regarding dampness in Council houses appeared to be increasing but practically without exception, investigations revealed the cause of dampness as being condensation. This was aggravated by the houses being left empty and unheated during the day time whilst cooking and washing are done in the evening and the dwelling rapidly heated by paraffin or gas fires which emit a high moisture content vapour.

The following table shows the number and type of improvement grants made during the year and the total to date:-

		£
Standard Grant 1965	37	6470
Total to December, 1965	161	26181
Discretionary Grants 1965	19	5925
Total to December, 1965	205	55304

In addition to the above eight mortgages were approved to the value of £4369 for the specific purpose of improving the dwelling. It will be observed from the above table that the percentage of dwellings which have been approved by the two grant systems is approximately 13 %. It is ofcourse necessary to deduct Council houses and other dwellings which were built with all amenities from the total dwellings in the district to arrive at this figure.

Housing Cont'd.

During the year one dwelling was sheduled for demolition and this now leaves 19 in the district to be dealt with from the original list. As has been stated in previous reports, many of these pose special problems as they are linked with an agricultural holding and it is not a straight forward matter of rehousing the occupant on some housing estate possibly several miles from his land. Several of these may now be improved with the advent of a piped water supply in some of the more remote areas.

The Council had previously acquired premises at Sudbrook which comprised three badly arranged flats and an annexe used as a store and I intended to convert the whole into five self contained dwellings. Work was not commenced owing to the failure of securing satisfactory tenders for this work. A tender was originally accepted but the Contractor later withdrew.

Tenders were accepted to build four aged persons bungalows at Rogiet and plans were proceeding to build four at Devauden.

The standard of cleanliness in Council houses was generally found to be good with the exception of a few problem familie's which would not exceed 1%. One case of infestation by bed bugs was found and dealt with.

A total of 34 caravans were licenced mainly on individual sites and presented no difficulty in controlling. Considerable nuisance was caused, however, by itinerant traders who camped on grass verges and laybys in the district from time to time and left the sites in an appalling condition. These persons, who mainly emanated from Eire, towed caravans with their lorries and deposited large quantities of refuse, scrap materials etc., before moving on to adjoining areas. There seems little control over this type of dweller.

Factories Act.

The following tables show the number and type of factory premises throughout the area. They are divided into those which have mechanical power installed and those which do not, and the local authority bear a larger responsibility for those in the latter category. In the case of mechanical factories the Council's duties extend only to the control of sanitary conveniences whereas in the other cases they are responsible for cleanliness, overcrowding, temperature, ventilation and drainage of floors. There were no outworkers employed during the year.

Premises	Number in Register	Inspections	Written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted.
Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4, and 6 are to be enforced by the Local Authority.	14	38	-	-
Factories not included in (1) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	25	42	-	-
Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority (excluding outworkers premises)	-	-	-	-
Total :-	39	80	-	-

	Number of cases in which defects were:				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted.
	Found	Remedied	referred to H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness	1	1	-	-	-
Overcrowding	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate ventilation	-	-	-	-	-
In effective drainage of floors	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences					
(a) Insufficient	-	-	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective	2	2	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes	-	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork).	-	-	-	-	-
Total :-	3	3	NIL	NIL	NIL

Sewerage

Public sewers serve the villages of Rogiet, Caldicot, Sudbrook, St. Arvans and Devauden and the Council have plans to provide this facility at Caerwent, Tintern, Undy, Portskewett and Mathern. At the end of the year the position regarding these schemes was as follows:-

Undy	:-	This is a joint scheme with the adjoining authority Magor and St. Mellons R.D.C. and the scheme was due to be advertised for tenders.
Tintern	:-	The scheme was proceeding but defects were located in the main sewer and these were being rectified.
Caerwent	:-	The uncertainty of the future of the R.N.P.F. at Dinham was causing some difficulty in preparing drawings as it is intended to utilise the Admiralty disposal works and effluent pipe.

Stage II of the Caldicot sewerage scheme was completed during the year which means that the major portion of Caldicot and Rogiet villages are drained to a common pumping station at Caldicot and thence to the newly constructed disposal works. These works consist of grit vortex tanks, balancing and sedimentation tanks, sludge digestion tanks which reduce the volume of sludge assist in its dewatering and produce methane gas and sludge drying beds.

The connection of 58 dwellings at St. Arvans to the public sewer was completed during the year at a cost of £3797.

The cesspool emptying service consisted of two vehicles and this operated at a cost of £6397. The scheme gives a free service to all domestic premises whilst business premises are charged 30s.0d per hour. In view of the number of emptyings which a minority of householders demand it may eventually become necessary to review the financial arrangement of this scheme.

Water Supply

Although the Newport and South Monmouthshire Water Board are the Statutory undertakers for the supply of water in the rural district, it is the Council's prerogative and duty to take samples for bacteriological analysis by the Public Health Laboratory at Newport and the following table shows the samples which have been taken during the year:-

Parish	Samples	Raw	Treated	Results	
				Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Severn Tunnel Area	16		16	14	2
Devauden	4		4	4	
Shirenewton	4		4	4	
Tintern	9		9	9	
Matherne	4		4	4	
St. Arvans	6		6	6	
Itton	14	14		3	11
<hr/>					
Total:-	57	14	43	44	13

As will be observed the quality of the water at Itton gives rise to grave concern and this situation has existed for many years. This private supply consists of two separate sources serving the parish of Itton through two separate mains with both supplies being grossly polluted. The Water Board have endeavoured to acquire the supply but due to obscure legal difficulties this is not possible without the unanimous agreement of the 55 householders. This has not been forthcoming and at the time of writing, it is not possible to see any way out of the deadlock. All consumers have been warned to boil their drinking water.

With the exception of a portion of St. Arvans village the quality of water throughout the district has been satisfactory. In St. Arvans nine houses are served from a separate supply from the main part of the village owing to the fact that these dwellings are located above the storage reservoir. The source of this small supply has been polluted and the consumers have been advised to boil their drinking water as at Itton.

Improvements were made in the supply to the village of Llanfair Discoed and Common y Coed in the parish of Undy received a supply for the first time. At the end of the year enquiries were being received from owners wishing to improve their dwellings which had hitherto not been possible.

Food.

The following table shows the number and type of food premises in the district:-

<u>Premises</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Number of Inspections</u>
Bakehouses	2	10
Butchers	6	28
Fish and Food premises	4	9
Food Vehicles	8	20
Ice Cream Premises	35	38
Provision Shops	41	92
Restaurants and Canteens	37	86

The following foodstuffs were examined and found to be unfit for human consumption. They were voluntarily surrendered by the owners and subsequently disposed of at Portskewett Refuse tip.

<u>Description</u>	<u>Reason for Condemnation.</u>	<u>Amount in lbs.</u>
Tinned Cooked Ham	Decomposition	38 lbs.

The general standard of cleanliness in food premises throughout the year was good but informal action was taken in a few instances. Four employees were warned for smoking and the walls and floors of two premises were cleaned. The biggest difficulty encountered in small establishments is adequate storage space and provision for the disposal of litter and refuse so that attention was drawn in several cases to the need for keeping this refuse down to a minimum.

There are no slaughterhouses in the district but meat was inspected in butchers shops and during transport. This was found to be satisfactory due mainly to the vigilance maintained in Newport County Borough whence much of this meat emanated.

The standard in kitchens, particularly the hotels was good and no problems existed in this field. Managements are co-operative and the staff are well supervised.

